

Assumption of the Holy Virgin Orthodox Church

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Mailing Address: PO Box 20083 * Point Breeze Station | Philadelphia PA 19145-0383

Sunday, March 12, 2017 | Second Sunday of Great Lent

Tone 5 – Saint Gregory of Palamas.

Ven. Theophanes the Confessor, of Sigriane (818).
Righteous Phineas, grandson of Aaron (ca. 1500 B.C.)

V. Rev. Mark W Koczak, Acting Rector

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Parish President - Peter Parsells

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Weekly Schedule

Today: Property Committee Meeting in church school room after the Divine Liturgy.

Today: Mission Services – There are **two** locations today.
St. Michael's Church in Philly and Holy Trinity in Pottstown
Both Begin at 4:00pm!
See Calendar of Events for more details in today's bulletin.

Tuesday: March 14 – Bible Study at 6:30pm. Book of Leviticus

Wednesday: March 15 - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts begins at 6:30PM

Friday: **March 17 - Akathist begins at 6:30PM CANCELLED!**

Saturday: March 18 – Great Vespers at **5:00PM!**

Sunday: March 19 – Third Sunday of Great Lent!

Veneration of the Cross!

Reading of Hours – 9:30am

Divine Liturgy – 10:00am

Fellowship & coffee hour to follow the Divine Liturgy

Texts for the Liturgical Service

Troparion (Tone 5)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, / co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, / born for our salvation from the Virgin; / for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, / to endure death, and to raise the dead // by His glorious Resurrection.

Troparion (Tone 8 – St Gregory Palamas)

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, / O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, / O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, // always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Kontakion (Tone 4 – Lenten Triodion)

Now is the time for action! / Judgment is at the doors! / So let us rise and fast, / offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: / “Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; / but forgive us, O Master of all, // so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

Kontakion (Tone 8 – St Gregory Palamas)

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, / joyful trumpet of theology, / together we sing thy praises, O God-inspired Gregory. / Since thou now standest before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, // so that we may sing to thee: “Rejoice, O preacher of grace!”

Prokeimenon (Tone 5)

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
v. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.

Epistle Reading: Hebrews 1:10-2:3

And: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.” But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

Alleluia (3x's) (Tone 5)

- v. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. Alleluia (3x's)
- v. For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. Alleluia (3x's)

Gospel Reading: Mark 2:1-12

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins – He said to the paralytic, I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house. Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Instead of "It is truly meet..." we sing the following

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace: / the assembly of Angels and the race of men. / O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, / the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a Child: / our God before the ages. / He made your body into a throne, / and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens. / All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. // Glory to thee!

Communion Hymn:

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise him in the highest!
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. Alleluia (3x's)

Announcements

A Warm Welcome to all of our visitors & guests who worshiped with us today and who have joined us in celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Please join us in the church basement for our Fellowship and Coffee Hour.

Announcements (cont.)

LOST & FOUND: A pair of black gloves was left on the stage in the church basement last Sunday. They have been placed on the front center part of the stage (in front of the icon stand) for the owner to retrieve them.

Thank you to all parishioners who contributed to February's charity collection earmarked for the Father John Nightingale Appeal. Through your generous donations, the parish will be forwarding **\$350** towards the appeal.

Fr John is considered a paraplegic after a fall from his porch last year left him with injuries to his neck, vertebrae and spinal cord. He has been in the VA hospital in the Bronx, NY for the past year. Matushka Kyra has not only traveled to the VA hospital to care for Fr John, she is also caring for her own parents. There has been work done in their home for handicap accessibility including a doorway and ramp to the house along with a handicap bathroom. More details in a letter from the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania is posted on the bulletin board.

The parish has a HP Printer with a toner cartridge available for anyone who wants it. Also included is a CD disc with instructions and setup along with the original packaging box. The only issues with the printer is there is no Internet connection to perform wireless remote printing (say from an iPad or a smart phone), there is no USB port connections, and it only prints black & white copies. This printer is available due to the parish upgrading its printer last year that includes copying and scanning capabilities. If interested, please see either Kenny Kavalkovich or Matt Andrews for additional details. Even though the printer is being presented, a free will offering for the printer that will go towards future office supply purchases for the parish would be very much appreciated.

Attendance: Second Week of Great Lent Services

Last Friday (3/3) – Presanctificied Liturgy = 13 (not 10 as reported last week. Sorry!)
Saturday (3/4) – Vespers = 10
Sunday Mission Service (3/4) = 12 from our parish attended!!
Wednesday (3/8) – Presanctificied Liturgy = Cancelled due to Fr. Mark's illness.
Friday (3/9) – Akathist Service = Cancelled due to Fr. Mark's illness.
Saturday (3/10) – Memorial Saturday Liturgy – Cancelled due to Fr. Mark's illness

***[Note: Today's readings for Saint Gregory of Palamas are as follows:
Epistle – Hebrews 7:26-8:2 and Gospel - John 10:9-16]***

Announcements (cont.)

Candles and Prayers for the Faithful and Departed

Health for the Living:

Emelie Albrecht offered by Nina Patterson
Michael Glacken offered by David Pellack
Olga Macalush, Joseph Herbert, Emelie Albrecht, Dave Albrecht, and
Sandra and Neil Hourahan (25th Anniversary) offered by M/M Herbert
Karen Prentercast, Hunter James offered by M/M Al Kavalkovich
Marie Fortner, Mary and Simon Herbert offered by Nancy Brasko Rabik
John, Marissa, Lila, Mia and Katerina Rabik offered by Nancy Brasko Rabik

May God Grant Them Many Blessed Years!

Memory for the Departed:

Sophie Herbert, Rosemary Barhight offered by M/M Herbert
John and Julia Drimak offered by Jack Drimak
William and Julia Brasko, Sophie Herbert, Rosemary Barhight, Alfonso Vasallo
offered by Nancy Brasko Rabik

May Their Memories Be Eternal

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Please remember in your prayers: Fr. Mark; Dave Albrecht Sr (on his recovery from surgery and rehabilitation); Emelie Albrecht (on her hospital stay and rehabilitation); Cantrell Family; Grace Corba; Robert Corba; Ronald Kavalkovich (on his recovery from surgery); Julia Makara; Margaret Pellack; Helen Riley; Helen Wanenchak; Father Vincent Saverino; Father John Bohush and the parishioners of Saint Nicholas Eastern Orthodox Church in Philadelphia; and all those who are serving in our Armed Forces!

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Parish Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting held on January 22, 2017 and the minutes from the Special Parish Meeting held on February 5, 2017 have been posted on the bulletin board in the church basement (bulletin board where the sign up sheets are located) for your reading pleasure. Please ensure you review these minutes before our next parish meeting (scheduled to be held sometime during the month of May) since a motion to accept these minutes will be voted on during said meeting.

Please ensure that your Mobile Phone is set to Silent (or at least set on vibrate) during the Divine Liturgy! Thank You!!!

Announcements (cont.)

Sign up sheets for Coffee Hour, Cleaning and Epistle & Hours Reading. Sign up sheets for the above items are posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. Please be considerate and volunteer to assist with some of the parish responsibilities. Your time is very much appreciated!

Special weekly collections taken after Gospel or Sermon. In addition to our general collection, the parish takes a special collection each week to fund certain parish projects. Please be generous with your offering. Every little bit counts. The special collections are as follows:

- First Sunday of every month – Kitchen Fund Project
- Second Sunday of every month – Icon Fund (2016-17)
- Third Sunday of every month - Restoration/Maintenance Fund
- Fourth Sunday of every month – Charity Giving

Note: if there is a Fifth Sunday during a month, the special collection is earmarked for the Kitchen Fund Project, unless otherwise noted and stated by the Parish Council.

Cash Flow Activity (February/March)

	<u>Week of Feb 27 to Mar 5</u>	<u>February Month (Unaudited)</u>
Attendance:	42	36 (average)
Funds In:	\$ 1,723.94	\$ 8,145.94
Funds Out:	\$ 4,543.13	\$ 8,472.09
Net Surplus/(Deficit):	(\$ 2,819.19)	(\$ 326.15)

Thank you all for your continuous offerings to maintain the parish!

Shop Rite Gift Cards: If you need to purchase Shop Rite Gift Cards, please see David Pellack to secure them. Your purchase of a Shop Rite Gift Card is an additional fundraising project that helps support the church at no additional expense to the purchaser.

Calendar of Events

1st Sunday of each month – Monthly Panikhida immediately after Liturgy.
2nd Tuesday of each month – Bible Study at 6:30pm in church basement.
2nd Sunday of each month – Property Committee Meeting after Liturgy.
3rd Sunday of each month – Property Committee Meeting after Liturgy. *(if needed)*
4th Sunday of each month – Church Life Discussion Class after Liturgy.

PASCHA FLOWERS. We are collecting for Pascha (Easter) flowers during the Lenten Season. There are special envelopes available to use for your offering for Pascha flower donations. Please give the envelopes to Debbie Kavalkovich or to a member of the parish council for your offering.

Today – Mission Service at 4:00pm. (TWO LOCATIONS)

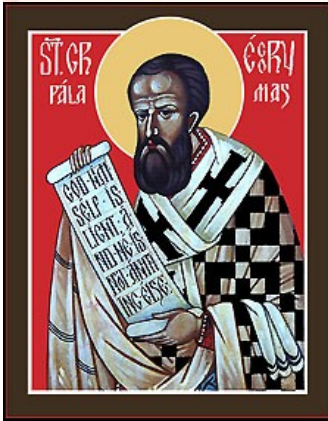
Philadelphia Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood Mission Service location:
Saint Michael's Russian Orthodox Church * 4th St & Fairmount Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19123. Phone #215.627.6148
Website: <http://www.saintmichaelsroc.org>

Philadelphia Deanery of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania (OCA)
Holy Trinity Orthodox Church * 1236 Juniper Street
Pottstown, PA 19464. Phone #610.323.4183
Website: <http://www.holytrinitypottstown.org>

Today – Property Committee Meeting after Divine Liturgy in the Church School Room! All property committee members are asked to attend the meeting. An agenda was forwarded by email as to what will be discussed in this meeting and the responsibilities assigned to members.

Bible Study – Tuesday, March 14 at 6:30pm in the church basement. The Bible Study Group will gather together at this time and has already begun reading the next book in the bible. They will continue reading and discussing the Book of Leviticus.

The Schedule of Services during the Lenten Season (for both here at our parish and the Sunday Mission Services) have been posted on the church bulletin boards (in the church vestibule and the church basement) Please check them often for the dates and times of the services. As always, if there are any changes to the service schedule, they will be announced in church, noted in the bulletin, and posted on the parish's social media outlets (i.e. parish website and parish Facebook page).



Second Sunday of Great Lent: Saint Gregory of [March 12th]

This Sunday was originally dedicated to St Polycarp of Smyrna (February 23). After his glorification in 1368, a second commemoration of St Gregory Palamas (November 14) was appointed for the Second Sunday of Great Lent as a second “Triumph of Orthodoxy.”

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in the year 1296 in Constantinople. St Gregory’s father became a prominent dignitary at the court of Andronicus II Paleologos (1282-1328), but he soon died, and Andronicus himself took part in the raising and education of the fatherless boy. Endowed with fine abilities and great diligence, Gregory

mastered all the subjects which then comprised the full course of medieval higher education. The emperor hoped that the youth would devote himself to government work. But Gregory, barely twenty years old, withdrew to Mount Athos in the year 1316 (other sources say 1318) and became a novice in the Vatopedi monastery under the guidance of the monastic Elder St Nicodemus of Vatopedi (July 11). There he was tonsured and began on the path of asceticism. A year later, the holy Evangelist John the Theologian appeared to him in a vision and promised him his spiritual protection. Gregory’s mother and sisters also became monastics.

After the demise of the Elder Nicodemus, St Gregory spent eight years of spiritual struggle under the guidance of the Elder Nicephorus, and after the latter’s death, Gregory transferred to the Lavra of St Athanasius (July 5). Here he served in the trapeza, and then became a church singer. But after three years, he resettled in the small skete of Glossia, striving for a greater degree of spiritual perfection. The head of this monastery began to teach the young man the method of unceasing prayer and mental activity, which had been cultivated by monastics, beginning with the great desert ascetics of the fourth century: Evagrius Pontikos and St Macarius of Egypt (January 19).

Later on, in the eleventh century St Simeon the New Theologian (March 12) provided detailed instruction in mental activity for those praying in an outward manner, and the ascetics of Athos put it into practice. The experienced use of mental prayer (or prayer of the heart), requiring solitude and quiet, is called “Hesychasm” (from the Greek “hesychia” meaning calm, silence), and those practicing it were called “hesychasts.”

During his stay at Glossia the future hierarch Gregory became fully imbued with the spirit of hesychasm and adopted it as an essential part of his life. In the year 1326, because of the threat of Turkish invasions, he and the brethren retreated to Thessalonica, where he was then ordained to the holy priesthood.

St Gregory combined his priestly duties with the life of a hermit. Five days of the week he spent in silence and prayer, and only on Saturday and Sunday did he come out to his people. He celebrated divine services and preached sermons. For those present in church, his teaching often evoked both tenderness and tears. Sometimes he visited theological gatherings of the city’s educated youth, headed by the future patriarch, Isidore. After he returned from a visit to Constantinople, he found a place suitable for solitary life near Thessalonica the region of Bereia. Soon he gathered here a small community of solitary monks and guided it for five years.

In 1331 the saint withdrew to Mt. Athos and lived in solitude at the skete of St Sava, near the Lavra of St Athanasius. In 1333 he was appointed Igumen of the Esphigmenou monastery in the northern part of the Holy Mountain. In 1336 the saint returned to the skete of St Sava, where he devoted himself to theological works, continuing with this until the end of his life.

In the 1330s events took place in the life of the Eastern Church which put St Gregory among the most significant universal apologists of Orthodoxy, and brought him great renown as a teacher of hesychasm.